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SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET

-2-

Garrison Training

1. [] garrison training from November 1949 until April 1950. During that time, the training phases were individual manual of arms and drill, and squad and platoon training which included drill, nomenclature of weapons, firing and tactics. Company level training consisted of tactical training, lectures on engineering, chemistry, and medicine. The tactical training included digging of fox holes, crawling flat on the stomach, and attacking by short rushes. During the winter garrison training, approximately three months were designated for squad training, one month for platoon training, and one month for company level training. In April 1950 [] a battalion level exercise. [] marched a distance of 20 kms in a simulated attack and [] after a short rest, marched back to [] compound. Trucks loaded with ammunition and supplies preceded the marching troops []
2. Range firing was scheduled monthly, but enlisted men actually fired only when the regimental commanding officer was notified that an army inspection team would check the progress of target practice. Then all the enlisted men fired for about five days, each shooting daily nine rounds from light machine guns and submachine guns, and four rounds from carbines. This was [] the allotted norm for target practice. []
- [] at the winter garrison in Plauen, an alarm was sounded at 0200 hours on three separate occasions: December 1949, February 1950, and March 1950. The enlisted men, equipped with their gas masks, weapons but no ammunition, and an extra uniform, marched about 15 kms to a wooded area where they dug trenches, camouflaged their positions, and sat around until 1600 hours at which time, they returned to their barracks. The return trip of 15 kms required approximately three hours and included marching double time for half hour periods with ten-minute breaks. []
- [] During the bivouac, the food was prepared in field kitchens and served in mess kits.
3. The following daily training schedule applied to all phases of summer and winter training, except border guard duty:
- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 0600 - 0610 | Reveille |
| 0610 - 0630 | Physical training |
| 0630 - 0645 | Morning toilet |
| 0645 - 0700 | Inspection |
| 0700 - 0800 | Breakfast: in two half-hour shifts |
| 0800 - 1000 | Political lectures twice a week: training for the balance of the week |
| 1000 - 1600 | Marching, close order drill, field exercises, lectures on engineering, nomenclature of weapons, aiming and assembly of weapons, various tactical training |
| 1600 - 1630 | Clean weapons |
| 1630 - 1700 | Supper |
| 1700 - 1830 | Rest |
| 1830 - 2030 | Political discussions |
| 2030 - 2200 | Free time |
| 2200 - 2230 | Evening inspection, roll call |
| 2230 - 2245 | Close order march |
| 2245 - 2300 | Preparation for bed |
| 2300 | Taps |

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET

-3-

50X1-HUM

[redacted] the following 48-hour schedule was maintained:

1800 - 1800	Guard duty: four hours on and eight hours off; the men ate and slept during off-duty hours
1800 - 0600	Rest
0600 - 0610	Reveille
0610 - 0630	Physical training
0630 - 0645	Morning toilet
0645 - 0700	Inspection by squad leader
0700 - 0730	Breakfast
0730 - 0800	Platoon leader read the daily news to EM
0800 - 1200	Training: usually political lectures or nomenclature and assembly of weapons
1200 - 1400	Clean weapons and uniforms, free time
1400 - 1430	Dinner
1430 - 1800	Rest

Enlisted men were excused from guard duty if the morning inspection determined that some part of his uniform was not in order. For example, an enlisted man had only one pair of boots and if these needed repairs and no others were available, he was excused from duty until the boots were repaired.

4. Training was conducted by squad NCOs under the supervision of platoon leaders; sometimes the company commander supervised the training.
5. Training inspections were conducted twice a year to determine training efficiency: at the end of winter training and again at the end of summer training. The inspection teams, [redacted] were from the 39th Gds Rifle Div, also checked on political indoctrination of the unit.
6. The main deficiency found by the inspection teams was the lack of energy and ambition. After each inspection, the company commander and platoon leaders would reprimand the enlisted men for being lazy and without spirit. [redacted]

50X1-HUM

50X1-HUM

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8.

[redacted] Political training to prepare troops for combat was given in the form of political lectures which emphasized that the [redacted] "imperialists" were preparing for a new war and the Soviet Army had to be on the alert and ready to protect the fatherland (Rodina). These lectures were given to the summer and winter training groups and to troops on border guard duty.

50X1-HUM

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

-4-

SECRET

9. The term for the NCO School of the 112th Gds Rifle Regt lasted nine months: from February 1949 to October 1949. It was attended by 120 students who were selected for their physical appearance, education, and general deportment. Both the 117th Gds Rifle Regt and the 112th Gds Rifle Regt had an NCO school.

Enlisted men were not anxious to attend the school inasmuch as an NCO must serve at least one year longer than a private and had no additional liberties. The only advantage was a small increase in pay. Since there were not enough volunteers, men were ordered to attend the schools. The school was organized into a company which was broken down into two rifle platoons of 45 men each, and one mortar platoon of five gun crews or a total of 15 men. Lt Col Michailov was appointed Commanding Officer of the NCO School, 112th Gds Rifle Regt in February 1949. Prior to this assignment with the school, he was Commanding Officer of the 3d Bn, 112th Gds Rifle Regt; his replacement was Maj Koturov, newly assigned from the USSR.

students graduated as sergeants, junior sergeants, and privates first class, depending upon their scholastic standing.

another nine month term started in October 1949.

Those men assigned to the mortar platoon were trained only on mortars.

10. New inductees were integrated into squads and trained along with the other men.

Summer Training

11. On or about 14 April 1950, the 112th Gds Rifle Regt started the move from its winter quarters in Plauen to its summer quarters in Ohrdruf. The 6th Co of the 112th Gds Rifle Regt, composed of about five officers and 80 enlisted men, was left behind to guard the barracks and ammunition depot of the 112th Regt. The NCO School also made the move with the 112th Regt.
12. The 6th Co, which remained in Plauen all summer, kept all of its weapons and ammunition. Other ammunition was also left behind. five or six trucks were also left behind at the winter quarters.
13. All guns, vehicles, weapons, and equipment belonging to units subordinated to the 112th Gds Rifle Regt were taken to Ohrdruf, with the exception of those assigned to the 6th Co.

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET

SECRET / SECURITY INFORMATION

-5-

SECRET

14. The move to summer quarters was effected by rail and required three days. Twenty-five railroad cars, including flatcars, were utilized each day. [redacted] one battalion and some portion of the supporting units of the 112th Gds Rifle Regt moved each day. The men rode and slept on the floors of baggage cars, each of which accommodated 40 of them. Their equipment, consisting of overcoat, knapsack, mess kit, gas mask, shovel, and weapons, but no ammunition, was carried with them. The trucks, packed with equipment, were loaded on flatcars at the railroad station in Plauen. The first sergeant and the supply NCO handled all the ammunition which was kept in the quarters of the first sergeant. [redacted] the EM mess was a former German Army mess where the men of the 112th Regt ate in two shifts. EM took showers every ten days.
15. Free motion pictures on Saturday and Sunday evenings from 2200 to 2330 hours and supervised athletics on Sunday afternoons provided recreation for the EM. Some of the men provided entertainment by playing musical instruments. Card playing and any form of gambling were strictly prohibited. The EM had no clubs or dances, but the officers held weekly dances at their club and invited female Soviet civilians employed in nearby towns to attend.
16. The 112th Gds Rifle Regt conducted its firing exercises, field problems, etc. at the former German range located four kms from the summer quarters. The range was about 70 kms square. For five days [redacted] with a 7.62-mm Degtyarev light machine gun on silhouette targets one meter high at 300 meters. [redacted] three rounds at each target from a prone position. Three various type silhouette targets were set up at the same time for each man firing; three men fired simultaneously. The terrain was level, free of underbrush and trees, but grassy. [redacted] Ammunition was supplied to the squad leaders by the first sergeant. While the 112th Regt was stationed at Ohrdruf, food and clothing were stored in the basement of the barracks in which the soldiers lived. [redacted]
17. Enlisted men of the 112th Gds Rifle Regt were restricted at all times to their unit area. Kommandatura patrols kept a sharp look-out for EM in the villages and the towns in the vicinity of the summer camp. Officers were free to go into town.
18. Training started on 2 May 1950, about three weeks after the arrival in summer quarters. The period from 15 April to 2 May was spent in cleaning the barracks, fixing up lawns, digging latrines, etc. The training schedule at the summer quarters was identical to that given while in winter quarters in Plauen. The only free time was daily from 2030 to 2200 hours each day. Saturday afternoons and Sundays.
- [redacted]

SECRET / SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET

SECRETSECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION
-6-

19. [REDACTED]

50X1-HUM

20. The morale among the EM was very low but they voiced their complaints only among themselves; had they complained to their officers, they would have been given extra work details or a few days in the guardhouse. They were dissatisfied with the army because of the poor pay, bad food, no leave, lack of personal freedom, the continuous drive of training, and the ban on drinking and fraternization. EM had been permitted to buy beer until the spring of 1951, at which time it was prohibited. Other alcoholic drinks were always prohibited to EM.

21. [REDACTED] Very few incidents of disobedience occurred. Once a Pvt [REDACTED] refused to run during attack exercises because his feet hurt. His squad NCO reported him to the platoon commander who gave him a special duty assignment for three nights in addition to his ordinary duties and training. While they were in the summer area, many EM remained away from the camp at night but returned in time for reveille. If caught, the punishment was five to ten days in the guardhouse for the second offense; if caught a third time, they were court-martialled and sentenced to a labor camp in the USSR.

50X1-HUM

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22. [REDACTED]

50X1-HUM

23. [REDACTED]

24. [REDACTED]

25. Some Soviet officers had their dependents living with them in Germany. Some EM who had volunteered to serve beyond their regular tour of duty (Sverkhstrochniki) had their dependents with them in the Soviet Zone. [REDACTED]

50X1-HUM

[REDACTED] Soviet officers enjoy more freedom than EM; the latter must always stay in their unit area and with their unit members. They must even notify their friends when they go to the latrine. EM receive leave only in case of the death of either parent, while officers receive 45 days annual leave plus travel time. [REDACTED]

50X1-HUM

[REDACTED] There was no guardhouse on the border. Discipline on the border was not as strict as in garrison or the summer camp; almost all the EM drank. If an EM assigned on the border became drunk, and this happened frequently, it was ignored; otherwise there was not a sufficient number of men to go on duty. If an EM was found guilty of drunkenness three or four times in a row, the guard committee would ask the company for a replacement. During [REDACTED] twelve months [REDACTED] on the border, about 18 men were found guilty of periodic drunkenness and were transferred

50X1-HUM

50X1-HUM

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET

SECRET / SECURITY INFORMATION
-7-

SECRET

50X1-HUM

to the company. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] about 30 officers of the 117th Gds Rifle Regt contacted VD each year. [REDACTED]

50X1-HUM

50X1-HUM

[REDACTED] two men [REDACTED] were returned to the USSR before the expiration of their normal tours of duty. A lieutenant assigned to the 2d Bn, 4th Co, 112th Gds Rifle Regt took two enlisted men from the same unit for a ride on his motorcycle. The lieutenant was drunk at the time and crashed his motorcycle into a tree, killing one of the enlisted men. The lieutenant and surviving EM were court-martialled and returned to the USSR to serve their hard-labor sentences of seven and four years, respectively.

50X1-HUM

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